

Yukikazu MORI, S.N. 09/459,202
Page 19

Dkt. No. 2271/60882

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated May 20, 2005. Claims 1-33 are pending, with claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 being in independent form. By this Amendment, claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 have been amended to clarify the claimed invention.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9-14, 18-22, 25 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,445 to Bashoura et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,437,871 to Yuki. Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura. Claims 31 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura and further in view of Yuki. Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 15-17, 21, 23-25, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Yuki and U.S. Patent No. 5,381,527 to Inniss et al. Claims 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Inniss.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to network facsimile operations. A network facsimile device typically has a built-in scanner for scanning a document and outputting image information corresponding to the scanned document, and can transmit the image information through plural communication modes to a specified destination address.

The claimed invention (of independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28) of this application is directed to improvements devised by Applicant for network facsimile devices including providing means for registering for each destination a plurality of address information

Yukikazu MORI, S.N. 09/459,202
Page 20

Dkt. No. 2271/60882

(for example, an electronic mail address, an IP address and a telephone number) corresponding to plural respective communication modes (for example, by electronic mail, by real time Internet communication, by facsimile communication through a public network, etc.) for transmitting the document image information to the destination. Subsequently, an operator can quickly, through use of an input means of the network facsimile device, designate one of the destinations and one of the communication modes by selecting a corresponding one of the addresses registered for the destination, and the document image information is transmitted to the designated destination by the designated communication mode corresponding to the selected address.

Bashoura, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a fax director device which can be connected to a standard facsimile machine and a personal computer, to perform automatic fax routing of transmissions from the standard fax machine. The fax director decodes a telephone number, specified by a user of the facsimile machine, which is encoded by the fax machine in a facsimile transmission, and then compares the decoded telephone number to a look-up table. If an Internet address corresponding to the decoded telephone number is found in the table, the fax is automatically downloaded from the fax machine, converted to a computer file, and then sent to the matched Internet address. The rerouting of the transmission through the Internet is transparent to the user. The user is not presented with a choice of plural communication modes for selection by the user.

Yuki, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a facsimile apparatus with a one-touch dial memory portion which stores for each destination a telephone number, an IP address and cost information. When the user selects a destination for a facsimile, a CPU automatically (a) retrieves the data for the destination in the one-touch dial memory portion, (b) determines the cheapest communication mode for transmitting the facsimile to the destination, and (c) transmits

Yukikazu MORI, S.N. 09/459,202
Page 21

Dkt. No. 2271/60882

the facsimile to the destination via the cheapest communication mode. The user is not presented with a choice of the communication modes.

Therefore, Yuki, like Bashoura, does not disclose or suggest a network facsimile device including input means for operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses to which the document image information is to be transmitted, wherein one of the plurality of destinations and one of the plurality of communication modes are selected by designating the one address among the plurality of addresses using the input means, as provided by the claimed invention of this application.

Inniss, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a system for distribution of messages through one of plural prioritized distribution channels (such as facsimile transmission, voice communication by telephone, electronic mail, voice mail, etc.). The Office Action cites Inniss as disclosing prioritizing the communication modes.

Applicant does not find disclosure or suggestion in the cited art, however, of a network facsimile device which comprises (a) scanner means which scans a document and generates document image information corresponding to the scanned document, (b) input means for operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses to which the document image information is to be transmitted, (c) wherein one of the plurality of destinations and one of the plurality of communication modes are selected by designating the one address among the plurality of addresses using the input means, as provided by the claimed

Yukikazu MORI, S.N. 09/459,202
Page 22

Dkt. No. 2271/60882


invention of this application.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,


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